SQUIRE PATTON BOGGS

Stephen Sampson



Partner

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About Stephen

Stephen Sampson is the head of our UK Litigation Practice, and the industry group leader and an EMEA lead of the Sports & Entertainment Group. He is widely recognised as one of the leading sports and entertainment lawyers in the industry.

He advises on a wide range of regulatory, contentious and commercial issues, including disputes, investigations and transactions, acts as advocate before sports tribunals and holds external positions within the sector.

Stephen has practised in the sports, media and entertainment sector for almost 30 years. He has been ranked in band one or above in the legal directories for over a decade. He sits as a CAS arbitrator and is the vice chairman of the UEFA Club Financial Control Body Appeals Chamber. He was formerly (*pro bono*) chairman of Parkour Earth and (*pro bono*) a member of the World Triathlon Tribunal.

Stephen advises across most major sports. He builds long-term relationships with clients, commonly acting for clubs, governing bodies, agencies, sports businesses and players for over a decade, and manages relationships with those clients for the firm. He has particular experience in football, where he has acted for all of the international and national bodies governing football in England, the majority of the Premier League clubs, major talent agencies and leading players.

A high court litigator and advocate by training, Stephen leads teams handling substantial investigations and disputes, whether before the courts or sports tribunals. His work in investigations includes leading the review team or advising the party subject to investigation on issues such as financial wrongdoing, financial compliance, corruption, sexual abuse, racism and ownership.

His advisory and disputes work includes contracts, economic torts, agency law, restraint of trade, public law standards, data rights, disciplinary charges, competition law in the sports sector, the employment of players, coaching staff and executives, regulatory compliance and regulatory aspects of corporate transactions, arbitration proceedings and specialist sports tribunals in England and elsewhere and heavy High Court litigation, including interim relief. He has acted in many cases that have helped shape the sports industry in the UK and Europe.

Stephen leads and manages our UK and European Litigation Practice Group and our worldwide Sports & Entertainment Group. He started as a trainee solicitor with the firm in 1998 and mentors and develops colleagues through their career progression.

Credentials

Education

- Nottingham Law School, Postgraduate Diploma, 1996
- Nottingham Law School, L.P.C.
- The University of Nottingham, B.A.

Admissions

- England and Wales, 1998

Recognitions

- Recommend in Band 1 in *Chambers UK* 2027 for Sports Law UK-wide
- Ranked in Hall of Fame in *Legal 500 UK* 2027 for Sports
- Included in the 12th edition of *The Best Lawyers in the United Kingdom* for Sports Law
- Recommended in *Who's Who Legal* as a Thought Leader: Sports & Gaming 2026

Expertise

Services

- Litigation
- Government Investigations & White Collar

Industries

- Sports & Entertainment

Client Testimonials

- *Legal 500 UK* 2022 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "One of the most experienced sports lawyers in the UK with unrivalled knowledge. He is also one of the most hard working, well prepared and thoughtful solicitors in the space, who gives 100% to his clients and has very good judgment."
  - "An exceptional litigator, not only with a vast knowledge but with a very down-to-earth practical way of applying that knowledge to what was a very novel area of law."
- *Legal 500 UK* 2023 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Exceptional experience – Stephen Sampson. You can rely on Stephen doing a first-class job (and you know he will leave no stone unturned in ensuring the instruction is given the attention it requires and is completed on time)."
  - "Stephen Sampson is one of the most experienced solicitors in sport. He has excellent judgement and gives 100% to his clients."
  - "Stephen Sampson is cerebral, conscientious and committed – leaves no stone unturned."
- *Legal 500 UK* 2024 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Stephen Sampson is an absolute powerhouse. Always available, and always able to assess a situation on a call, talk you through the applicable laws and give you an opinion on that same call. One of the few partners not afraid to give you a risk analysis and tell you how to proceed."
- *Legal 500 UK* 2027 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Steve Sampson is, in my view, one of the most highly experienced and exceptional lawyers in sport, especially in football, in the UK."
  - "Stephen Sampson is now massively experienced. He is thoughtful, diligent, and strategically astute."

- *The Chambers UK* 2022 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "He is one of the most knowledgeable and experienced sports lawyers in the country, and someone who will always go the extra mile for his clients."
- *The Chambers UK* 2023 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Stephen is an excellent litigator with a very commercial mind."
  - "He's a football supremo. He has a wealth of experience and knowledge, with enough commercial awareness to navigate us through some tricky areas."
  - "Stephen Sampson is a superb lawyer who understands the needs of the client. His willingness to assist, wealth of knowledge and commercial awareness make him stand out."
- *The Chambers UK* 2024 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "One of the most dedicated and on top of the details solicitors. He has great judgement and will go the extra mile."
- *The Chambers UK* 2025 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Stephen Sampson is a go-to for sports industry matters and disputes."
  - "I think he is brilliant, and his reputation in the market is excellent."
  - "He is a litigator, but a lot of the clients he has go to him as a trusted adviser on non-contentious issues too."
- *The Chambers UK* 2026 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "One of the most experienced and longest-serving sports lawyers."
  - "I just really enjoy working with him. He's very helpful and strategic and has a great, user-friendly approach to things."
- *The Chambers UK* 2027 interviewees describe Stephen as:
  - "Stephen is really first class."
  - "Stephen is very responsive, experienced and approachable, and gives sensible advice."
  - "Stephen is vastly experienced, which gives a certain calmness, and he has a very good methodology for helping to get to a conclusion."

About our firm

One of the world's strongest integrated law firms, providing insight at the point where law, business and government meet. We deliver commercially focused business solutions by combining our legal, lobbying and political capabilities and invaluable connections on the ground to a diverse mix of clients, from long-established leading corporations to emerging businesses, startup visionaries and sovereign nations. More than 1,500 lawyers in over 40 offices across four continents provide unrivaled access to expertise.